

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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For Immediate Release

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Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on May 14, 2004, **TRAVIS L. ELDER**, age 36, of Carbondale, Illinois, was sentenced in United States District Court in Benton, Illinois. ELDER, who had previously pled guilty to a one-count indictment charging him with conspiracy to distribute 100 kilograms or more of marijuana, was sentenced to 120 months' imprisonment, 8 years supervised release, and was fined \$300.

The investigation established that between at least October 2001 and October 13, 2003, co-defendant JOHN H. BROOKS was transporting marihuana from Chicago to Carbondale. In Carbondale, the marihuana was being distributed by ELDER and others. On five occasions, ELDER sold marihuana to a confidential source working for law enforcement. When agents executed a search warrant at ELDER's Carbondale residence, on October 9, 2003, agents located marihuana, a firearm and ammunition, drug scales, a large amount of U.S. currency, included pre-recorded buy monies, and drug packaging materials. When agents arrested BROOKS in Carbondale, on October 13, 2003, BROOKS was in possession of marihuana and more than \$4,300, which included pre-recorded buy money. BROOKS was previously sentenced to 66 months' imprisonment for his involvement in the marihuana conspiracy.

The investigation was conducted by the Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, Murphysboro Police Department, Perry County Drug Task Force and Drug Enforcement Administration, pursuant to those agencies' participation in the Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative in the Southern District of Illinois. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals who use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses in the system that will get them the most time.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.